



SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
**CAREER DEVELOPMENT  
CENTER**

# Extern Program

## Student Planning Guide



# SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY CARBONDALE

## EXTERN PROGRAM

Thank you for considering participating in our Extern Program! For over 40 years, SIU has offered this unique professional development experience to students. To date, more than 4,000 Salukis have worked with companies and organizations across the nation, gaining first-hand experience.

The Extern Program provides an unpaid one-week career preparation and exploration opportunity for current students. Its purpose is to give students a professional experience related to their academic and career interests. It can also help them explore and decide on a career field after graduation. To participate, students apply to opportunities that best match their career goals and location requirements. This experience allows them to apply classroom knowledge in a professional work environment, gain real-world career insights, and expand their professional network. Some externships even lead to lifelong mentors, internships, or even full-time employment offers.

The Extern Program takes place during SIU's spring break each year. Students apply for externship positions based on their major, career interests, and the host-developed description of the experience. The Extern hosts select students that they feel will benefit the most from the experience they offer.

This guide will help you navigate the Extern Program application process and understand what to expect if you are offered an externship. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Career Development Center.

### HOW TO BECOME AN EXTERN

The Extern Program is open to most majors, but please review the eligibility requirements below if you are interested in this experience.

#### Eligibility Requirements:

- Be in at least your third semester of undergraduate studies at SIU, or a transfer student. Master's and JD students may also apply. Freshmen and PhD students are ineligible.
- Be enrolled full-time at SIU during the application process and during the externship. Students graduating in December are ineligible for the following semester's program.
- Complete the online application, which requires a resume and a cover letter specifically written for the program.
- Have a 3.0 GPA.\*

\*Please do not let this requirement stop you from applying. If you have questions or concerns, please contact us.

## Extern Expectations

As an extern, you represent your department, college, and Southern Illinois University. You are expected to adhere to the Student Conduct Code and present yourself professionally. Here are key areas of professional behavior to consider:

### Respect

Maintain a respectful attitude towards others. Host employers are dedicating their time to provide you with this valuable experience. Show appreciation and courtesy for the opportunity and their efforts.

### Communication

Stay in touch with the Career Development Center and your host employer after being matched. Reach out to your host to express gratitude for the opportunity and discuss the agenda and logistics, including transportation, dress code, accommodations, and parking. During your externship, come prepared with questions, listen actively, and engage fully in the experience.

### Time Management

“Early is on time, on time is late, and late is unacceptable.” - Eric Jerome Dickey. Punctuality is crucial. Plan your transportation in advance and communicate with your host about your schedule. Know your itinerary and ensure you arrive on time.

### Safety

Before the externship begins, discuss safety protocols with your host. Follow any safety guidelines provided.

### Dress

Consult with your host regarding appropriate attire. When in doubt, business casual is generally suitable. If you need professional clothing, visit the Career Development Center between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm, Monday-Friday, to use the professional clothing closet. The clothing is free and yours to keep.

### Commitment

By applying for and accepting an externship, you are committing to complete the experience. Failure to follow through will result in ineligibility for future extern opportunities. In case of an emergency, contact the Career Development Center at 618-453-2391.



## STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

*"This externship served as a major foot in the door in starting my professional career. It allowed me to learn what exact career path I wanted to follow without even realizing it. If you are looking to gain real and beneficial experience within your major, I would recommend applying to the SIU Extern Program. You won't regret it!"*

*"My extern experience at Whitney taught me so much and I value the advice that was given to me. The environment was positive and I was able to receive a lot of informational feedback to questions I otherwise would not have felt confident enough to ask. With this experience – now more than ever I have a career to look forward to!"*

*"My host treated me with the utmost respect and made me feel I was a part of the team. I really enjoyed the work environment and getting to experience what it was like to be a part of the company."*

*"Meet meaningful mentors who provide life advice you would need years to learn on your own in the span of a week."*

*"I learned a lot which can't be taught at school, and everyone was open to communicating with me and answering the questions I had. It gave me a good perspective of what an engineer in the process manufacturing does."*

*"This was an absolutely priceless experience. I feel like I had a serious insight into what it means to be a motion designer and what an agency team is like. I've improved so much from what I learned at Scofield! I would highly recommend this externship to other students interested in motion design, if they apply to the program."*

*"A great first step into the professional world!"*

*"I just can't say enough about this program. It was a great experience and an absolute pleasure to take part in, even for just a short time."*

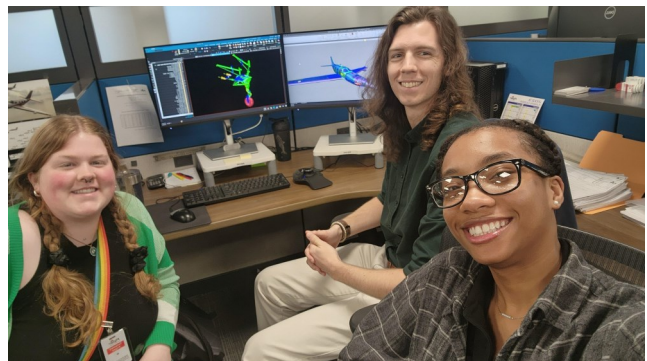
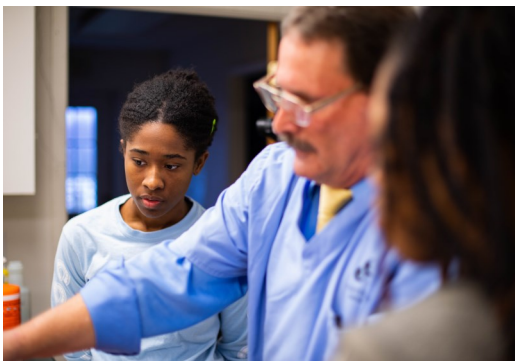
*"It was a very valuable experience. I learned a lot and it helped me decide on my next adventure."*

*"There are a lot of parts about a future job that can't be learned from just a classroom alone. That's why this externship was so important."*

*"Everyone should do it!"*

*"It was a great experience and I feel that I made beneficial connections that will help my career. I got to see what it was like in an architectural office and got to observe the dialogue that happens between employees."*

*"I learned a lot about a company I didn't even really know about, and it helped if anything confirms my interest in my major."*



## FAQs

### **I do not meet the 3.0 GPA requirement; can I still participate?**

While a 3.0 GPA is recommended to ensure students are managing their coursework well, exceptions can be made. If your GPA is below 3.0, please contact the Career Development Center to discuss your situation and potential eligibility.

### **I'm a Doctoral/PhD student and want to participate, can I?**

Currently, the Extern Program does not include doctoral students. If you are seeking experiential learning opportunities like internships, please reach out to our office at 618-453-2391. We can assist you in finding suitable opportunities.

### **I'm a Freshman and I want to participate, can I?**

The program requires students to be in at least their third semester of undergraduate studies at SIU. Hosts generally prefer more advanced students with relevant coursework. We appreciate your enthusiasm and encourage you to apply in the future. In the meantime, focus on your studies and acclimating to university life.

### **Is the externship paid?**

Externships are unpaid. Students participate with the understanding that they will not receive compensation. However, there are limited travel assistance funds available. The application for travel assistance will be provided after you apply, are accepted, and placed with a host employer, as travel expenses can then be accurately estimated. Please note that applying for travel assistance does not guarantee reimbursement.

### **How are externship placements decided?**

Students apply to externships that align with their academic interests, the location of the externship, and the host's description of the experience. Hosts review applications, conduct interviews, and select the student(s) they wish to host.

### **What do I do if I cannot commit to my externship placement?**

If you are unable to follow through with your externship placement after being selected by a host, immediately notify your host and the Career Development Center. Early communication may allow us to reschedule your experience or find an alternative solution. Failure to inform the Career Development Center and your host may result in disqualification from future participation in the Extern Program.



# SAMPLE ITINERARIES

## Sample #1

### MONDAY

- 8:30 a.m. Arrive meet with John for tour of the office, introductions.
- 9:00 a.m. Meet with John, Jane and Adam to discuss the background of the company, growth, what markets we operate in, and specifically what segments they will be seeing throughout the week in this office.
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch
- 1:00 p.m. Structural Analysis introduction with Grace.
- 2:00 p.m. Pair off meet and shadow structural engineer through a project.

### TUESDAY

- 8:30 a.m. Arrive, continue shadowing engineers through structural projects.
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch
- 1:00 p.m. Continue shadowing engineers through structural projects.

### WEDNESDAY

- 8:30 a.m. Arrive, continue shadowing engineers through structural projects.
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch
- 1:00 p.m. Q and A with Grace on open structural items.
- 2:00 p.m. Meet with John and Jane to discuss inspection projects and process.
- 3:00 p.m. Work on inspection project with John.

### THURSDAY

- 8:30 a.m. Arrive, continue to work on ATC inspection project with John.
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch
- 1:00 p.m. Continue to work on ATC inspection project with John.

### FRIDAY

- 8:30 a.m. Arrive, continue to work on ATC inspection project with John.
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch with John, Jane, and Adam.
- 1:00 p.m. Wrap up ATC inspection project with John.
- 3:00 p.m. Close out week with Adam.

**Work Times** | 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

**Attire** - We work in a comfortable atmosphere – jeans, gym shoes, sweatshirts, etc. Please feel free to dress comfortably. Also, please dress warm since we may have some outdoor activities and the weather can be chilly.

### Location

1234 N. Central Ave., Carbondale, IL 62901, 123-456-7890 ext. 1

### Directions

We are on the north side of Central Avenue between Main Street and Mill Street. Our door entrance is next to the bookstore, across the street from the restaurant. Be advised that Central Avenue is a one-way street heading north. We are close to public transportation: metra, CTA, and train (red, blue, and yellow).

### Company Information

Please review the website to familiarize yourself with our clientele as you will be participating in various field marketing activities, research gatherings, and focus group

## Sample #2

Monday

10:00am | Orientation.

12:00pm | Street team preparation.

2:00pm | Attend promotional event.

Tuesday

10:00am | Marketing project time.

1:00pm | Conference call with prospective client.

2:00pm | Attend promotional event.

10:00pm | Promotional party at local restaurant.

Wednesday

12:00pm | Late start; charity run promotion.

3:00pm | Organize data from feedback sheet.

Thursday

10:00am | Organize music for day's promotional event.

12:00pm | Conference call with client.

2:00pm | Questions and answers with director.

2:30pm | Finishing of marketing campaign.

Friday

10:00am | Concert preparation.

1:00pm | Meet with director of advertising.

3:00pm | Meet and greet with CEO of company.

4:00pm | Farewell party!





For questions, concerns, or more information regarding the Extern Program, please reach out to:

SIU Career Development Center  
618-453-2391  
[careerdevelopment@siu.edu](mailto:careerdevelopment@siu.edu)